

Bulletin of Anomalous Experience

Volume 5, Number 3 **June 1994**

For information on subscriptions, contributions to BAE, and copyright policy, see page 15

Editorial

Lessons from ISSD

by David Gotlib, M.D.

In early May I attended the spring conference of the International Society for the Study of Multiple Personality and Dissociation (ISSMP&D). (Actually, that weekend they changed their name to the International Society for the Study of Dissociation, or ISSD). I was invited to present a paper on the abduction experience for one of the General Sessions, and was generally well-received.

The field of dissociative disorders shares some similarities to the study and treatment of abductions. Both are associated in the popular mind with sensational books and movies (remember Three Faces of Eve, and Sybil?), and both have faced disbelief and accusations of misdiagnosis, misuse of hypnosis and iatrogenesis (i.e. the doctors are really creating the problem).

There were a couple of patterns I observed during the conference which are regrettably absent from the abduction field.

They learn from their critics

The effect of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation's efforts was evident throughout the weekend. Speakers discussed the fundamental unknowability of whether any memory is accurate or not. They debated the moral, therapeutic and legal implications of this in many sessions, including a discussion group with leading lights of the dissociative disorders field which ended the conference. The nature of informed consent (which, according to one speaker, should more properly be called "informed uncertainty") regarding the veridiciality of recovered memories was debated. The dangers of therapists, support groups, group therapy and mass media influencing recovered memories were taken quite seriously, and ways of minimizing the influence of these factors were discussed.

While the FMSF's tactics were not applauded, and their motivations sometimes questioned, the speakers recognized a valid issue at the core of the FMSF argument, and felt it was both scientifically and politically essential to take the argument seriously. They recognized that many questions remained to be answered, including the "ecological validity" of applying laboratory research on memory to recall of traumatic memory, but did not dismiss such research out of hand.

Scientific research to elucidate basic process

The other noteworthy aspect of the conference was the presentation of extensive scientific research about multiple personality disorder (MPD). For example, Colin Ross, a psychiatrist at the forefront of research into MPD, presented persuasive evidence that MPD was in fact a disorder distinct from other psychiatric diagnoses, and not a result of misdiagnosis or iatrogenesis (i.e. created by eager therapists who believe in MPD). Some of his studies used scales that have been developed over the last decade specifically for the evaluation of dissociation and MPD. He showed how these scales have been proven reliable and meaningful through validation on large populations of patients, against different evaluators ("inter-rater reliability") and against other, generally accepted psychiatric measures. He also showed outcome studies demonstrating the effectiveness of treatment approaches to MPD advocated by the ISSD.

This rigorous approach has resulted in greater acceptance by the psychiatric community of MPD as a valid diagnosis. And there has been a significant dividend: Evidence leading towards a new paradigm for psychiatry, one in which childhood trauma rather than biological abnormalities (or psychoanalytic processes) emerges as the primary mechanism underlying most mental illness.

Does the Abduction Field Measure Up?

Compared to the field of dissociative disorders, abduction research compares poorly on both serious consideration of criticism, and quality and quantity of rigorously scientific research. Consider how little solid research there is on essential issues like what (if anything) makes an individual more likely to be abducted, the disproving of prosaic hypotheses, or outcome studies of different forms of treatment.

Research findings challenging the basic belief system of the field (i.e. that abductions are real events) are minimized or ignored. One example of this is Ken Ring's Omega Project. Ring identified a distinct set of characteristics for people likely to report abductions, one of them being a tendency to report a traumatic or abusive childhood. One would have expected this to generate efforts by others to confirm or invalidate this finding. Instead, it was greeted as the ufological equivalent of being politically incorrect, because it was seen to challenge the reality basis of abductions, or minimize the dignity and suffering of abductees.

And while great emphasis was placed in the UFO community on Spanos's findings from late last year that abductees are not more fantasy-prone or less intelligent, etc, than controls, almost nobody seemed to remark on his potentially significant finding that nearly 60% of the UFO-"intense" subjects' experiences were sleep-related. One could argue with Spanos's conclusions (that the experiences were caused, among other prosaic explanations, by hypnagogic imagery and disorientation while falling asleep), but not with his general observation, which is consistently reported in the abduction literature.

Legal and Ethical Considerations

Besides the scientific aspect, there are also the legal and ethical considerations involved in abduction research and therapy. Consider the following story from the Toronto Star of March 15, 1994:

> In a case that could fundamentally alter how therapists do their jobs, a California jury has ruled two therapists implanted false memories of child abuse in a patient and wrongly harmed her father.
>
> The superior court jury decided Friday on a 10-2 vote that therapist Marche Isabelia, Dr. Richard Rose, chief of psychiatry at Western Medical Centre in Anaheim, and the hospital were negligent in their treatment of Holly Ramona, now 23. It awarded her father $500,000 in damages.
>
> ...Gary Ramona, who Holly said repeatedly raped her between the ages of 5 and 8, has been "totally vindicated" by the decision, the father's attorney, Richard Harrington, said in an interview...
>
> Holly Ramona's suspicions that she might have been molested surfaced in early 1990, when she was receiving therapy for depression and an eating disorder while attending the University of California, Irvine. She testified during the trial that the memories were triggered by a trip back home in 199 — a Christmas excursion during which her father looked at her in a sexual fashion...[she later] had flashbacks, [including] the image of her father's hand on her stomach, [and] a memory in which "I was on a bed, there was a lot of light and a white sheet. My father was on top of me. His penis was inside me."
>
> Gary Ramona, and a cadre of expert witnesses who testified on his behalf during the nearly two-month trial, contended that Isabella implanted the memories in a vulnerable girl's mind and used the hypnotic drug sodium amytal to prove that the images were true.

It may only be a matter of time before an abduction investigator or therapist has to defend themselves against a licensing board or a prosecuting attorney, accused of implanting false memories of abductions in a client. And arguments which convince acolytes at a MUFON symposium (intensity of abreaction with recall, and concordance of stories) won't stand up under the harsh light of a courtroom or competency hearing.

I wrote about this problem in some detail two years ago in a paper I gave at the Abduction Study Conference at MIT. And last year (in BAE 4.2) I wrote an editorial on the emerging power of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation, which was reprinted in both MUFON UFO Journal and Kevin McClure's The Wild Places. But on the whole there has been little effort, or apparent will, to address this issue in Ufology.

The Ethics Code

I hope a paper appearing in the current issue of Journal of UFO Studies (Volume 5, 1994) will stimulate some movement in this area. The "Ethics Code for Abduction Experience Investigation and Treatment", which I co-wrote along with Stuart Appelle, Mark Rodeghier, and Georgia Flamburis, is a comprehensive guide to ethical conduct in investigation and treatment. In developing the Code, we studied ethical codes of professional organizations, and sought guidance from experiencers, investigators, mental health professionals, social scientists, bioethicists, and others. A draft version of the Code was distributed to the abduction community and other interested parties in the spring of 1993 for comment.

The following excerpt from the Preface points out the many benefits of practicing investigation and treatment according to the Code:

> 1. Protection of Experiencer. It is the primary purpose of this document to protect the rights and welfare of the individuals with whom abduction investigators and MHPs work. Ethical investigation and treatment will serve to protect the experiencer from unreasonable risk created by participation in investigation or treatment.
>
> 2. Benefits to science. Research conducted along these ethical guidelines will facilitate open and unbiased responses from experiencers, and reduce the chances for misinterpretation or misapplication of the findings.
>
> 3. Benefits to treatment. Therapeutic outcome depends on the ethical behavior of the MHP. Treatment for the abduction experience that follows ethical guidelines will best serve the experiencer.
>
> 4. Protection of MHP and investigator. Adherence to these guidelines provides a safeguard against behaviors inconsistent with legal, professional, and ethical conduct, especially for those not members of professional societies or whose professional conduct is not regulated by a licensing authority. They do not supersede the ethical guidelines of individual societies or the law.
>
> 5. Public and media relations. Adherence to these guidelines will promote professional behavior, which will increase public support for this work and will help ensure that information disseminated to the media will be based on practices appropriate for investigation and treatment.

The Code is not a manual on methodology or technique for investigation or therapy. But it is a long-needed set of standards which, if adopted, can help abduction studies move towards becoming a mature, professional and responsible scientific and humanitarian enterprise.

I encourage readers to acquire the relevant issue of JUFOS. It can be ordered from Center for UFO Studies, 2457 West Peterson, Chicago Illinois 60659, for $18 (non-U.S. orders are US$21). Reprints are available at no charge from me, but I encourage you to support JUFOS by purchasing your own copy.



Mail

Comment on "The Meaningfulness of 'Mass Hallucination' "

I was intrigued by the BVM discussion on page 3 of the April 1994 BAE. Back in 1982 I was asked to write a book on the subject (The Evidence for Visions of the Virgin Mary, Aquarian, 1983. Now, I guess, well out of print), and I had the opportunity to do some fairly basic research.

The simple truth is that there is no 'mass BVM sighting'. Never has been. Of the BVM events generally accepted as 'major', there were 2 witnesses at La Salette, 1 at Lourdes, between 4 and 6 at Pontmain, 3 at Fatima (who individually saw and heard to greater or lesser degrees from one event to another), 5 at Beauraing, 1 at Banneux and, principally, 4 at Garabandal. Though many thousands of people were present during reported events, particularly at Lourdes and Fatima, in no case is there any reason to believe that others could see what the witnesses reported they saw. Witnesses were, without exception, young, less than well-educated, and raised within, and aware of, a Roman Catholic context. It is simple to trace a clear pattern of development as one vision was affected by its predecessors, and only at La Salette and Pontmain was the development and characterisation of the figure in the vision, and the significance of its message, not substantially affected by adults.

For example, when Bernadette Soubirous, the visionary at Lourdes first described what she saw at her first vision, she spoke of 'something white in the shape of a woman or girl', about her own age — 14. In the local dialect she described it as *Aquero,* roughly meaning 'that thing' or 'that one'. The information from her second vision led to the conclusion that she was seeing the ghost of a local young woman who had recently died. Not till a devout Catholic relative had become involved in attending Bernadette's visions was the figure identified as the Blessed Virgin Mary. You will realise that the figure of the BVM at Lourdes is seldom represented as a 14-year old girl dressed in white.

Fatima, too, is deeply undependable. At the last event, on October 13th 1917, some 70,000 people were present, including a good number of journalists and photographers. The three children saw the BVM, but saw no solar miracle. Nor did half or more of the crowd. What did happen was that, as the BVM left, Lucia, the eldest and principal witness, saw the whole Holy Family appear by the sun in the sky. She called out, "Look at the sun", and many in the crowd duly did so. It is possible that most of those who saw some aerial phenomenon were in a broad band across the centre of the Cova where the crowd was gathered, but the reports are not clear. There are accounts of witnesses seeing their surroundings bathed in colours ranging from pearl, to yellow, to amethyst, to purple. People said they could look at the sun without it hurting their eyes. But a good half of the crowd saw nothing, and there is not a single photograph of anything other than the crowd. I am no expert on visual perception, but what colours do you see if you look at the sun for too long? And if you look at any very bright object, fixedly, does it appear to move?

The letters from Mark Briggs and Steve Mizrach, with all due respect, highlight the need for avoiding assumptions when we attempt to synthesize explanations for reports of anomalous experience. The history of BVM visions can teach us all kinds of lessons concerning the nature of contact experience, the investigator effect, and the possible dangers of permitting the overlay of belief on a vulnerable witness by a powerful and convinced mentor or counsellor. Several of the witnesses in the few visions mentioned above were also exploited for the purposes of politics, religious schism, or simple status and advantage. Not much is new.

Kevin McClure

Kevin McClure, publisher of The Wild Places and Alien Scripture, is planning to combine those two publications into a new one called NHI: Investigating Contact with Non-Human Intelligences. I'll let you know in these pages as soon as more information is available. In the meantime, you can write him at 42 Victoria Road, Mount Charles, St. Austell, Cornwall PL25 4QD.

Steve Mizrach replies:

Mr. McClure raises some points well worth addressing. I hope my UFO abduction/race fear article *[elsewhere in this issue - Ed.]* generates as much response! What I like most about BAE is the lively discussion it generates -- which I see so little of in most 'academic' journals.

To address some of the points in Kevin McClure's letter:

1. He is missing the point in saying (mostly correctly) that there have not been any 'mass' sightings of the BVM. (Actually, a large number of people — several dozen — did see a BVM apparition at Zeitoun, Egypt, in 1973.) It is true that at Fatima and elsewhere, she had not been seen by more than a handful of people; but the fact still remains that if five people (and only five) see the same hallucination, it remains a multiple hallucination — it is not occurring in only one mind.

2. To think that what was seen at Fatima by large numbers of people — the dancing and color changes of the sun — was simply the collective result of lots of people just staring at the sun too long is almost too silly to address. Staring at the sun too long is likely to cause all kinds of visual changes, as well as retinal damage from UV rays (hence the warnings not to look directly at an eclipse), but it is not likely to produce the same perceptual result in 35,000 (or fewer) pairs of eyes. The matter of not having any photographs of the "solar miracle" is interesting, and worthy

of further investigation. I am not aware of how many cameras were present at the event, or if any of them were ever trained at the sky in an attempt to capture it...

3. I am quite glad that McClure raises the point about how interpretations were overlaid on the content of the visions. It is quite true that in many cases, the original content of the apparition was simply that of a ghostly woman or girl, who never identified herself as the Virgin Mary, and that adults or other figures tried to guide the percipients toward this interpretation, perhaps for political or religious purposes.

Again, I am not really concerned with interpretations. My article dealt with the invalidity of the concept of multiple hallucination. In many of the above cases, two or more persons both claimed to perceive a feminine figure which may or may not have identified itself (or been identified by others) as the Virgin Mary; the key is that both percipients simultaneously perceived the apparition and its behaviors... and the question is how this can be explained through the hypothesis of 'hallucination,' which is normally an experience in an individual perceptual apparatus.

Comment on "On Comparing Disbelief of the Holocaust to Disbelief of Anomalous Experiences"

In her statement "On Comparing Disbelief of the Holocaust to Disbelief of Anomalous Experiences" in BAE 5.2, Georgia Flamburis expresses her concern about frequent comparison of individuals who do not believe Holocaust survivors to individuals who do not believe anomalous experiences. More specifically, under anomalous experiences she means the abduction events.

Then in the next sentence she suddenly changes the topic. She does not consider anymore comparing individuals, but only "two essentially different types of experiences." She finds that comparing different types of experiences is inappropriate. Comparing identical items leads to tautology and appropriate is only the comparison of different items. I would have no objections if what Ms. Flamburis wanted to say was that the traumas of the holocaust are very different from those of abductions.

Also, could she kindly explain what is the exact meaning of the sentence: "Comparing the two seems misleading as to extent any kind of trauma especially since the reality-level of non-ordinary experiences is not fully understood yet ?"

Finally Ms. Flamburis fears that making analogies between abductions and the Holocaust may further damage the credibility of abductions. The veracity of the Holocaust is based on hard evidential documents — photographs and films taken by the military, public statements made by official authorities, the judgment of Nuremberg, Holocaust museums and many others. If, let's assume, 95% people do believe in the Holocaust. and, let's assume, not more than 5% in abductions, it is still difficult to justify Ms. Flamburis' fears that the analogy would damage the credibility of abduction.

Alexander Imich, Ph.D.

Georgia Flamburis replies:

I would like to thank Dr. Imich for responding to my article, "Comparing Disbelief of the Holocaust to Disbelief of Anomalous Experiences," and bringing to my attention any discrepancies concerning logical standards of comparison and definition. I am not a professional writer nor a logician and hope the following will suffice in clarification.

Some individuals have compared disbelief of the abduction experience to disbelief in the Holocaust. Such comparisons imply a similarity, not just in the *effect* of disbelief, but also in the nature of the experience, the intensity of the traumas involved, and the reasons for disbelief — even if such a leap of association is not logical or the intention of the speaker.

The Holocaust happened at a real event level. There is a wealth of objective evidence to prove this. In comparison, there is a lack of consensus about the physical evidence to support the premise that abductions are real physical events.

Disbelievers of the Holocaust not only magnify the trauma of victims by denying the event, but do so for reasons and motives of their own. Those who disbelieve the abduction experience may have reasons and motives for denying it, but one inescapable reason is the lack of tangible evidence.

As to the sentence from my article which Dr. Imich requests I clarify:

a) "misleading as to extent... of trauma"

Though some abduction experiencers report bruises, scratches, scoop marks and other physical procedures and symptoms, they are not systematically murdered, tortured or branded. Abductees are not deprived of home, family, food, clothing, housing, medical care and human compassion; they are not placed in concentration camps.

b) "experienced in different reality levels not fully understood yet"

Abductions seem to happen outside of ordinary reality. Some abductee experiencers report their experiences happening on a level they cannot fully explain. Investigators, clinicians and researchers have theories and interpretations of what the experiences mean but no conclusive evidence to support their hypotheses.

The credibility of the abduction experience could be diminished if the public felt equating it to the Holocaust is inappropriate because

a) it highlights the inability to prove the abduction experience overall as a reality;

b) it is discourteous to the memory of victims of the Holocaust to make this comparison.

My final comment on this topic is that while I do not mean to minimize the reports of abduction experiencers who feel victimized by their abduction or to deny that an abduction experience could happen on a real event level, I do feel elucidation of the abduction experience can stand on its own without having to lean on this type of comparison.

Comments on "Too Much of a Good Thing?"

I have received three reactions to David Ritchey's suggestion that BAE was too long for a bimonthly publication. David himself suggested we do 12 isuses per year and 16 pages per issue. Another reader concurred with the 16-page size. On the other hand, Kevin McClure writes,

"Many thanks for the April BAE. Brilliant as usual. Please resist any attempt to make it shorter, less frequent or diminished in any other way! "

As promised last issue, I have inserted a survey form in this issue so readers can vote on this and some other topics of interest. Please fill out the form now and mail it to me. I will publish the results in the next issue.

Networking

Parapsychology Foundation Counseling Bureau

c/o Parapsychology Foundation, Inc.
228 E 71st Street, New York NY 10021
Telephone 212-628-1550, FAX 212-628-1559

I continue to get calls from people across the U.S. and Canada seeking a therapist familiar with the abduction experience. I do not maintain a formal referral list, so more often than not I can't really provide callers with the help they want.

As I noted last year in BAE, the Parapsychology Foundation's Counseling Bureau does provide such a service, so I am taking the liberty of reminding BAE readers about it, and encouraging clinician subscribers to register. Please note ***inclusion in their database is restricted to licensed clinicians only****.*

The Counseling Bureau's areas of interest include not just abduction experiences, but the entire spectrum of paranormal phenomena, including apparitions, hauntings, possession, and psychic "assault."

There is no cost for registering, or for using this service to obtain a referral. Licensed therapists wishing to be listed in their database should send the following information to the address above:

- Name
- Credentials
- License number and state(s) where you practice
(a copy of license must be included with registration form)
- Address; Phone and/or fax number(s)
- Areas of expertise
- Payment requirements, if any
- Other information as appropriate

Psychoscience: The Journal of the Society for Theoretical Psychiatry

PO Box 7176, Loma Linda, CA 92354-0689

Psychoscience is the journal of the Society for Theoretical Psychiatry, which describes itself as "an organization dedicated to the promotion and advancement of the study of the psyche as a scientific discipline. We view the psyche as part of a wider phenomenon than the functioning of the individual brain, and are fundamentally involved in establishing a physical foundation for this phenomenon and aplying this foundation to the areas of brain functioning, mental disorders, and society."

BAE readers may send for a ***free****, special introductory issue of this new Journal*: Advancing Toward the Millenium of the Mind. Included is an original paper by David Bohm: Soma-Significance: A New Notion of the Relationship of the Physical and the Mental. David Bohm, one of the greatest physicists of this century, was recently deceased, and this issue is dedicated to his memory. Also included: Ego and Time: Why Time Appears to Move Forward; Process, Psychoanalysis and the Human Problem; Psychic Mutation and World Peace, and more.

This offer is made available to current BAE subscribers only.

RIAP Bulletin

Editor: Vladimir V. Rubtsov, Ph.D.
Contributing Editors: Alexander V. Beletsky, M.A.; Yuriy N. Morozov, Ph.D.; Yuliy V. Platov, Ph.D.

from their brochure:

RIAP Bulletin (RB) is the official newsletter of the Research Institute on Anomalous Phenomena (RIAP) that has been established in 1992 by the Kharkov-based Aerospace Company "Vertical". The Institute aims at scientific studies in the field of non-classical SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence). RIAP has started its newsletter "RIAP Bulletin" (RB), published in English. The first issue of RB has been just printed and is being sent out. It contains the papers "Astrodynamical Aspect of Paleovisitology" by A.V. Arkhipov and "UFOs as Objects of Study by Terrestrial Physics" by V.A. Buerakov. In future issues there will appear, in particular, a survey of the problem of the famous Tunguska explosion, written by the leading Russian specialist on this problem — Dr. Nikolay V. Vasiliev, Member of Academy; a series of papers by A.V. Arkhipov, dealt with the search for artificial ET objects on the Moon; a paper of A.V. Beletsky on the current state of affairs in the post-Soviet ufology; a report on examination of the "Kassimov ball" — a supposed ET artifact, found in the former Soviet Union a few years ago, and many other materials.

The Bulletin is distributed among RIAP Fellows and Donators. Four issues are sent to any donator of $20 and more for RIAP research programs, and twelve issues to any donator of $50 and more. Donator of $100 and more will receive permanent subscription for RIAP Bulletin and other RIAP papers.

The donations can be transferred to RIAP through The Bank of New York (Route 2, Box 245, Airport Rd., Oriskany, N.Y. 13424, USA), correspondents account No. 890-0056-703 of Commercial Bank "Promin". The transferred money should be payable to Dr. Vladimir V. Rubtsov, Chernishevskogo 88/66, Kharkov 310023, Ukraine. Please add $15 to cover bank transfer fees and let us know your mailing address, to which we shall send RIAP publications.

For further details please contact us through mail (RIAP/RB, P.O. Box 4684, 310022 Kharkov-22, Ukraine), fax (+7 0572 79 11 11), or e-mail (riap@office.kharkov.ua).

The Scientific and Medical Network

Lesser Halings, Tilehouse Lane, Denham,
Nr. Uxbridge, Middx., UB9 5DG, England.
Tel/ Fax: +44 (0)895 835818
Internet: 100114.1637@compuserve.com

from their brochure:

The Scientific and Medical Network is an informal international group consisting mainly of qualified scientists and doctors, together with psychologists, engineers, philosophers, therapists and many other professionals. The aim of the Network is to deepen understanding in science, medicine and education by fostering both rational and intuitive insights.

The Network was founded in 1973 and now has around 1200 Members in 52 countries. It questions the assumptions of contemporary scientific and medical thinking, so often limited by exclusively materialistic reasoning.

The Network holds no corporate views. Its members explore concepts that go beyond generally accepted theories and are:

- Open to new observations and insights
- Rigorous in evaluating evidence and ideas
- Responsible in maintaining the highest scientific and ethical standards
- Sensitive to the views of others

The Network links like-minded individuals, encouraging exchange of ideas and information and cultivating friendship. Members share a common concern with the essential questions about the meaning and value of life.

The Network does not embrace the unorthodox for its own sake; it is not "anti-establishment", but its Members support the freedom to develop any worthwhile field of study, even if this means moving beyond what is currently considered scientifically plausible.

The Network encourages intellectual discernment and is wary of consequences of ill-founded and over-enthusiastic claims often made in the areas of pseudo-science.

Network Activities

A confidential Members' Directory, containing names, addresses, telephone numbers, plus details of Members' professional categories, interests, research projects and publications.

Network, a periodical containing articles, Members' notices, international news, details of forthcoming events and reviews of over forty books per issue on general science, medicine and health, psychology, parapsychology, philosophy of science and religion, spirituality, ecology and general interest.

The Network's annual programme includes a major residential conference, research group meetings, and weekend and evening lectures in different European countries.

Reviews

Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens by John Mack, M.D.

432 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons, $22 (Hardcover).

Review # 1 by David Gotlib, M.D.

Abduction will probably be a delight for true believers, but has little to convince critical readers, let alone skeptics, of the author's thesis. Dr. Mack dismisses, or at best addresses in an unconvincing manner, issues at the core of why the general public and mental health professionals fail to take abductions and abduction research (let alone treatment) seriously. This is a great disappointment for those of us who believed Mack had the stature and credentials to bring abduction studies into the mainstream: He is a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School's Cambridge Hospital, won a Pulitzer Prize for his biography of T.E. Lawrence, helped to found the Center for Psychology and Social Change, and has written over 150 articles and books on a variety of topics.

There are two central flaws in the book. First, while the majority of the abduction accounts are obtained through hypnosis, there is no substantial discussion of the reliability of such "recovered" memories. Mack dismisses the question as if it is irrelevant, saying that criticisms of hypnotic recall are based on laboratory studies outside of a real-world context, and are not applicable to *traumatic* memories. He cites for support only the observation of Daniel Brown, an expert in hypnosis, that "after carefully reviewing the literature on recall among trauma sufferers under hypnosis there are simply no studies of the accuracy of memory in this population, i.e. among individual for whom the events in question are of core meaning or central importance."

"No studies" simply means no evidence — one way or the other. In fact, the consensus in the scientific literature is that *there is no objectively reliable method of distinguishing a real memory from a confabulation, without objective corroborating evidence* (like a photograph or videotape) [Yapko, 1994]. The literature on clinical hypnosis is particularly clear that "affective appropriateness and a narrative consistent with how abductions generally proceed," Mack's criteria for believing recovered memories of abductions (p. 24), are *not* reliable indicators of the accuracy of memories.

There is a wide consensus about this in the scientific literature, which sees understanding the complexities of memory, how it may be contaminated and altered, and how to determine that a memory is accurate, as the new frontier for the healing arts. The author's failure to recognize this issue and argue his point, and not the "material and philosophical vested interests attached to the Western worldview," or the "total separation of the spirit and the physical world" in Western culture, is at the core of the criticism he has received, and practically guarantees that scientists and clinicians would dismiss the book.

Mack does not appear concerned that the memories of his subjects may have been influenced or contaminated — consciously or unconsciously — by material they have read, by himself, or his assistants or support group:

> I cannot avoid the fact that a co-creative intuitive process such as this may yield information that is in some sense the product of the intermingling or flowing together of the consciousnesses of the two (or more) people in the room. Something may be brought forth that was not there before in exactly the same form. Stated differently, the information gained in the sessions is not simply a remembered "item," lifted out of the experiencer's consciousness like a stone from a kidney. It may represent instead a developed or evolved perception, enriched by the connection that the experiencer and the investigator have made.
>
> From a Western perspective this might be called "distortion"; from a transpersonal point of view the experiencer and I may be participating in an evolution of consciousness. (p. 391)

Such "co-creation" of information may have therapeutic value or facilitate personal growth for Mack's clients, but, whether called "distortion" or "evolution of consciousness," it makes it impossible to rely on the historical accuracy of their memories. Rather than attempt to minimize such influence (a move which would have strengthened his argument), Mack appears to embrace and invite it.

The second major flaw in Abduction is that Mack takes the abduction scenario developed by Budd Hopkins and David Jacobs as *axiomatic*, despite the fact that neither the accuracy of their methods nor their findings are widely agreed upon even within Ufology, let alone in mainstream science. This is doubly curious, because Mack does not subscribe to Hopkins' and Jacobs' conclusion that abductions are happening 100% in physical reality.

Other weaknesses in Abduction deserve comment. Mack says he interviewed 76 abductees. He presents case studies of 13, and makes only the most general statements about the entire group. Unanswered questions about methodology make it difficult for a careful reader to evaluate this work: Where did he find his subjects? How did he decide whom to interview? How many of those he decided to interview turned out to be abductees, and how many did not?

And Mack has done psychological profiles on only four, one of whom was ill enough to be hospitalized. The reason he gives for this is "the administration of a full battery of psychometric tests is time-consuming and expensive." Apparently he did not think readers would feel such objective evidence would be of value, let alone necessary.

We are left to trust his impressions about personality characteristics and family relationships of his subjects.

The absence of such evidence is particularly disturbing because he misrepresents some of the studies which deal with this question. On page 17 he says, "The effort to discover a personality type associated with abductions has also not been successful." Yet one of the papers he cites to support this statement, the 1991 study by Rodeghier, Goodpaster and Blatterbauer, provides some evidence to the contrary. Here is a portion of the abstract from this paper, with italics added:

> "...data from the ICMI and CIS questionnaires suggest that the respondents cannot be characterized as fantasy-prone personalities or as especially hypnotically responsive. MMPI results suggest that the sample as a whole suffers from no overt pathologies. *However, a cluster analysis of the primary MMPI scales reveals two well-defined groups of abductees, clusters I and II. Cluster II has more elevated scores on most MMPI primary scales and significantly higher scores in the Keane PTSD subscale. This group also has significantly higher fantasy-prone scores. Cluster II respondents report more loneliness as adults, lower levels of happiness throughout their life, more problems sleeping, and a greater incidence of sexual abuse as children.* "

The authors went on to say that while they had demonstrated that abductees are not a random grouping from the general population, one could say little more without further study. They did *not* conclude that they had disproved the existence of a personality type associated with abductions. The authors called for "more detailed ...clinical assessments" of abductees. If Mack cannot provide such studies, who can?

Later in the same paragraph Mack states " ... Psychologist Kenneth Ring has posited the notion of an encounter-prone personality, a tendency of an individual who has been affected by unusual experiences to be more open to them in the future." Here is Ring's own description of his encounter-prone personality hypothesis from The Omega Project (italics added):

> "we have as a prototype an individual who, *coming from a history of childhood abuse and trauma,* has developed dissociative tendencies as well as a capacity to become deeply absorbed in alternate realities. Indeed, we can assume that such an individual, by virtue of this kind of psychological conditioning, is well accustomed to such unusual states of consciousness since he has often had recourse to enter them."

Mack misleads the reader, and does Ken Ring a disservice, by eliminating the reference to a history of child abuse and trauma as predisposing an individual to unusual experiences.

Mack takes similar liberty with Spanos's study from 1993 as well, listing it as one source supporting the lack of evidence of mental or emotional disturbance, but ignoring Spanos's finding that the UFO-intense group's experiences were more frequently sleep-related and his conclusion that these experiences were due to prosaic sleep problems or misperceptions associated with sleep.

As noted above, while Mack bases much of his work on the model of abductions worked out by Hopkins and Jacobs, his interpretation of the nature of abductions is decidedly different. He admits that much of his case material makes little sense "in the framework of the Western ontological paradigm." His solution is to discard that paradigm in favour of one in which anything is possible, where "familiar words like 'happening, ' 'occurred' and 'real' will themselves have to be thought of differently, less literally perhaps." Nowhere in the book is it explained how we are to change our definitions of these words or concepts. This argument is an oft-repeated "stopper" which effectively excludes any attempt at logical or rational analysis of his argument.

Rarely is an alternative explanation offered to even the most bizarre of stories. For instance, Paul (one of the 13 case studies) reports being "present" as a nine-year-old boy at Roswell in 1947, nineteen years before he was born. In the absence of objective corroborative evidence, this story might be fairly considered to be fantasy or imagination, however powerful. Not for Mack, who asserts that "the accounts that he provides ...defy space/time reality," and suggests "such space/time traveling can only make sense by conceiving of consciousness as a kind of hologram of universal sourcefulness which can create matter and form itself and to which Paul, and each of us potentially, has access if we can open and 'let go' as called for into this primal universal information or energy fabric."

So much for differential diagnosis. Mack's redefinition of "real" has profound and far-reaching implications for modern Western psychiatric diagnoses like schizophrenia, and for hallucinations, dreams, "fantasy-prone personalities," hallucinogen-induced states, and mystical experiences. Such implications are not addressed in this work.

Mack's discussion of the status of physical manifestations of abductions is confused. In one place he says:

> ...[the aliens] manifest in the physical world and bring about definable consequences in that domain. Unexplained or missing pregnancies, a variety of minor physical lesions, odd nosebleeds...Often these findings are subtle and difficult to prove by the methods of empirical science. They must, therefore, be seen as secondary evidence in support of what the abductees have reported. The sheer consistency and number of these accompanying physical findings make them too important to dismiss... (p. 392)

Yet elsewhere he makes an apparently contradictory statement:

> It needs to be stressed that we do not know if any of the above phenomena exist literally on the purely material plane of reality, despite the apparent physical manifestations, such as perceived pregnancies and hybrid babies...(p. 417)

It seems that the "phenomena" in question are both physical and non-physical, or neither physical nor non-

physical. If muddied language like this is where consciousness is evolving to, humanity is in big trouble. In any case, he gives no evidence to support "the sheer consistency and number" of these physical signs.

Mack pays his respect to the work of Hopkins and Jacobs, and explains that they have "established the essential consistency of the abduction phenomenon." Yet there is a major difference in his view of the abduction experience: While Hopkins and Jacobs see abductions as dehumanizing, traumatizing assaults, Mack expands on the "profound implications of the abduction phenomenon for the expansion of human consciousness, the opening of perception to realities beyond the manifest physical world and the necessity of changing our place in the cosmic order if the earth's living systems are to survive the human onslaught." Readers of these books should wonder what Hopkins and Jacobs think of this interpretation.

Mack's conclusion to one of his case studies neatly sums up his approach to abductions:

> Dave [one of his subjects] leaves us finally with the choice of rejecting the entire body of his experience as the product of some sort of mental aberration or collective influence, or of considering the possibility that consciousness is a valid instrument of knowing and that the view of reality provided by the empirical methods of Western science has been too limited. (p. 291)

In setting up such simplistic dichotomies, and summarily dismissing the entire corpus of Western science, Mack undermines rather than encourages the paradigm shift he so passionately advocates. Because science, in the best sense of the idea, is not about denying soul or spirit; it is, as Richard Powers has observed, about "cultivating a perpetual condition of wonder in the face of something that forever grows one step richer and subtler than our latest theory about it. It is about reverence, not mastery." Cultivating a scientific wonder about a phenomenon like the abduction experience, which, as Mack notes, shatters our notions of consensus reality, would have done infinitely more to nurture that sought-after bridge between Western and non-Western views of the universe than this volume.

References

1. Michael D. Yapko. Suggestibility and Repressed Memories of Abuse: A Survey of Psychotherapists' Beliefs. *Amer J Clin Hyp* 36(3), January 1994, 163-171.

2. Kenneth Ring. The Omega Project. New York: William Morrow & Co 1992.

3. Mark Rodeghier, Jeff Goodpaster and Sandra Blatterbauer. Psychosocial Characteristics of Abductees: Results from the CUFOS Abduction Project. *Journal of UFO Studies*, n.s. 3, 1991, 59-90.

Review #2: Additional Thoughts on Abduction

by Stuart Appelle, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology, and Associate Dean, School of Letters and Sciences
State University of New York, College at Brockport

David was kind enough to provide me with a copy of his review of Abduction, and to invite me to provide a commentary of my own. Because Abduction has been so widely reviewed already (*New York Times, The Atlantic, The New Republic, Boston Globe, The Washington Post, New York Times Book Review, Time, Psychology Today,* in addition to the usual ufology outlets — *MUFON UFO Journal, International UFO Reporter,* and now *BAE*), I was not sure if my own observations would have anything to add. Ultimately, I decided it might be helpful to focus on why, as David describes it, this book "dismisses, or at best addresses in an unconvincing manner, issues at the core of why the general public and mental health professionals fail to take abductions and abduction research (let alone treatment) seriously", and why the book has garnered generally derisive reviews (in fact, I know of no favorable review).

Mack's approach really is a puzzlement, especially to those who would assume that a "Pulitzer Prize-winning Harvard psychiatrist" would be just the kind of authority to take on such arguments. To understand why Abduction spends so little time examining alternative explanations, it is necessary to understand both Mack's interpretation of the nature of the abduction experience, and his perspective on the potential contribution of the scientific enterprise to the study of this phenomenon.

Mack asks his readers to accept his conclusions (i.e., that the abduction experience indicates an actual alien presence whose concern is for life on earth, and whose methods include direct intervention in the evolution of human consciousness) *in spite of* the absence of compelling evidence (at least as the concept of "compelling evidence" is normally understood). Let me make this clear. It is not simply that Abduction lacks compelling evidence. It is Mack himself who calls upon us to abandon a demand for traditional forms of evidence. This call is based on his interpretation of the abduction experience, and his feelings about the scientific method.

His interpretation of the abduction experience is that by its very nature (and purpose) it

> "provides enough evidence that something profoundly important is at work, but it does not offer the kinds of proof that would satisfy an exclusively empirical, rationalistic way of knowing."

In fact, he acknowledges that

> "needless to say, none of this [i.e., the reported characteristics of the abduction experience] makes much sense within the modern worldview brought to us by Western science".

Nevertheless, the reader is asked to "embrace the reality of the phenomenon".

It is not only Mack's interpretation of the abduction experience that leads him to argue for its acceptance on grounds other than conventional forms of evidence. Science, itself, is seen by Mack primarily in terms of its limitations, and sometimes with what appears to be contempt. According to Mack:

> "It is to a large degree, the scientific and governmental elite and the selected media that it controls that determine what we are to believe is real .... This 'politics of ontology' is, then, the primary arena in which the reality and significance of the UFO abduction phenomenon must be confronted."

Although this statement is intended only as a call to take the abduction phenomenon seriously (in spite of what "science", "government", and the "media" may tell you), it implies that science enjoys its preeminence as a source of knowledge not because of its genuine value in producing and verifying evidence, but because of socio-political dynamics.

Where does that leave Mack? If the abduction experience cannot yield "the kinds of proof that would satisfy" science, and the scientific enterprise itself should be regarded with suspicion, then by what process, and according to what criteria, should abductions be "studied"? According to Mack:

> "In order to learn about the worlds 'beyond the veil" [i.e., abduction experiences] ... we may need a different kind of consciousness. This means that the process of gaining information about abductions is, to a large degree, 'co-creative' — understanding comes to those who will accept it, and what I help bring forth from experiencers is something I am helping them to discover within themselves."

Furthermore, according to Mack,

> "the question of whether hypnosis [the primary vehicle for his co-creative process]... discloses accurately what literally or factually 'happened' may be inappropriate".

Rather, he feels it is more useful in this regard, to determine (1) consistency among experiences, (2) emotional conviction for the experience, and (3) the ability of the information to have a significant impact upon the lives of the experiencers. Mack indicates that it is on the strength of these criteria, not scientific validation of his methodology or conclusions, that he became a believer in the reality of alien abductions. And it is on these criteria that he asks the reader to do the same.

The reviews of Abduction seem to have uniformly rejected Mack's argument that his "co-creative intuitive process" is a more appropriate substitute for the scientific method, or that it is inappropriate to determine what "literally and factually happened". Indeed, they believe there is reason to suspect that what really happened was that his method of "investigation" contributed to the consistency, conviction, and impact he identifies as validating criteria. For example, Mack states that

> "Virtually *all* [Mack's original emphasis] the abductees with whom I have worked closely have demonstrated a commitment to changing their relationship to the earth, of living more gently on it or in greater harmony with the other creatures that live here. Each seems to be devoted to transforming his or her relationships with other people, to expressing love more openly, and transcending aggressive impulses".

Certainly he finds here consistency, conviction, and impact, but has Mack uncovered, as he proposes, a purpose to the abduction experience, or only a consequence of his procedures? Mack argues that his highly interactive approach to eliciting abduction experiences (i.e., his "co-creative intuitive process") "does not mean, as my critics sometimes have said, that I impose beliefs of my own about the phenomenon upon the experiencers." On the other hand, he admits that this process "may yield information that is in some sense the product of the intermingling or flowing together of the consciousness" of his client and himself. The only way I can understand Mack's position on this is that he regards *imposing* his attitudes on his clients as methodologically wrong, but *influencing* his clients as methodologically appropriate (even necessary).

Rather than debate the subtle distinction between "impose" and "influence", the reviews of Abduction have simply noted evidence for influence in Mack's own involvement in ecological causes, and the exposure of his clients to the author's central theme "that the abduction phenomenon is, at its core, about the preservation of life on Earth". Mack finds support for both his interpretation of the abduction phenomenon and his methodology in the fact that a focus on ecology and survival becomes more and more prominent across successive hypnosis sessions. But others will find evidence for influence in many of his case studies where the multiple hypnosis sessions with a client were interspersed (sometimes even preceded) with "support group" activity (during which exposure to Mack's philosophical position was inevitable), client examinations of their session transcripts, pre- and post-session philosophical discussions with Mack, and extensive reading about the abduction experience.

One must also wonder why "virtually all" (presumably about 76 out of 76) the experiencers with whom Mack worked have "demonstrated a commitment to changing their relationship to the earth", but among experiencers working with other prominent investigators, few have demonstrated such a commitment. If there is any doubt that Mack's attitude is sufficiently strong to have a potential influence, the following passage, expressing his vision of his collaborative effort with his clients, should eliminate that doubt:

> "Each abductee appears to me like a pioneer on a hero's journey. For as they undergo their own ego-destroying terror, and allow us to know about their experiences, their consciousness opens to the existence of unknown dimensions of the cosmos and the human psyche, which themselves appear increasingly to be profoundly interwoven. My own work with them, perhaps, has enabled them to acknowledge their experiences, and come to terms with the importance of the gifts they have to offer."

A final problem for Mack is his apparent acceptance of other controversial phenomena appearing in abduction narratives. I say "apparent acceptance", because even though he claims he does not necessarily "believe literally everything an abductee says", these phenomena are never really challenged (there is occasional mention that alternative explanations exist) and, in fact, they form the basis for much of Mack's interpretation of the abduction experience. Among these phenomena are past lives, dual (human/alien) identities, auras, clairvoyance, channeling, healing, "vibrations", spirits, shape-shifting, astral and time travel, infant memory, and something called "alternate" or "nonordinary" realities. This does not make it any easier for the critical reader to accept his alternatives to scientific verification.

In particular, the concept of an "alternate reality" reflects his objection to scientific evidence as a basis for belief. To argue that a phenomenon has nothing to do with reality as we understand it, is to argue that the existence of the phenomenon is not currently amenable to scientific scrutiny. This allows it to withstand any challenge simply by stating that it is "beyond" science. The alternative then, is to accept its existence on the basis of faith, intuition, and empathy.

Faith, intuition and empathy may be valuable clinical tools, but they are poor investigative tools. It is one thing for Mack to ask his readers to be "open-minded" to other realities. It is quite another thing to ask them to go beyond open-mindedness all the way to belief.

I know of no other book in ufology that has been reviewed as extensively as Abduction. It had been reviewed so extensively because of the "authority" of its author. It has been such a disappointment to reviewers not because of the author's conclusions, but because we are asked to accept these conclusions on the basis of the abduction experience's consistency, emotional impact, and transformational character rather than on traditional forms of evidence.

Unfortunately, Mack's "co-creative" investigative technique makes the source of the consistency unclear; and emotional impact and transformation are just as probable outcomes of firmly believed imaginary events as they are of firmly believed real ones. None of this means that Mack's conclusions are wrong. But in the absence of the empirical, rational evidence he eschews, his call for open-mindedness has not been enough to convince the reviewers of Abduction to join him in the leap from open-mindedness to belief.

Capsule Reviews

by David Ritchey, Ph.D.

David Ritchey is a hypnotherapist in Brattleboro, VT

Reunions
by Raymond Moody, M.D.
1993. Villard. 213 pages. Cloth.

Raymond Moody, it seems, is a master of minimalism. He write little books (about big subjects) *very* well. Reunions, his latest, is about facilitating, in the laboratory, visionary encounters with the spirits of the dead. "In the *laboratory? ... spirits ... an M.D.*,?" you might ask. Well, yes .... and he presents his findings in such a simple and charming manner, with just enough scientific underpinnings to prevent outright dismissal, that the reader can't help but be curious and want to know more.

Essentially, this book is a collection of case histories of subjects who, in Dr. Moody's Theater of the Mind, have had subjectively real experiences of perceiving and communicating with departed loved-ones through "mirror-gazing" techniques. After discussing a variety of reasons why society has historically tried to suppress mirror-gazing, Dr. Moody discusses, at some length, how to facilitate that alternate state of consciousness ("hypnagogia") which, he says, is the necessary condition for this phenomenon to occur.

Suggestions of Abuse
by Michael Yapko, Ph.D.
1994. Simon & Schuster. 271 pages. Cloth.

The so-called "False Memory Syndrome" is clearly shaping up to be *the* hot psychotherapeutic issue of the 1990s. Most of the literature on the subject has, unfortunately, been so polarized as to border on the hysterical, and it has been almost impossible for a thinking individual to access the facts involved. Michael Yapko's book, Suggestions of Abuse, comes as a real breath of fresh air in that it focuses on the mechanisms involved in and implications of false memories in a very logical and thoughtful manner.

While, admittedly, he devotes little space to the mechanisms involved in and implications of recovered [true] repressed memories, his one-sidedness is grounded in omission, not in commission. He is simply writing about false memories — and this he does very well. He discusses at length the mechanisms by which false memories can come into being; he takes a look at the impact false memories can have on the client and his or her family; and he offers a number of valuable suggestions as to how both the client and the therapist can avoid falling into the false memory trap.

For all who are interested in the false memory controversy, and for all therapists who work with abuse issues, recovered memories, or hypnosis (and what therapist doesn't — at least unwittingly?), this book is a "must read."

Psi and Clinical Practice

Proceedings of an International Conference held in London, England, October 28-29, 1989
Edited by Lisette Coly and Joanne D.S. McMahon
Hardcover, 233 pages. $20 US plus $2 handling cheque from Parapsychology Foundation Inc., 228 East 71st Street, New York, NY 10021

This is a gem of a book, of interest to students of abductions for many reasons, not the least of which is the tendency for abductees to report subjective paranormal experiences of many kinds. Keen minds are clearly at work in this mix of theoretical, investigative and clinical papers, and the transcripts of discussions which follow each paper. The state of our understanding of psi, and the art of counselling individuals reporting psychic experiences, are debated in a scholarly, compassionate fashion. This is science in the best sense of the word.

Table of contents:

Some nuggets:

One of the really horrific things that has taken place in Western culture is that being psychic has become a popular aspiration. The title is not only handed out often for political and other manipulative reasons within the field of psi research but it is also handed out and taken on as a stereotype in the culture, in ways that are just appalling....Often what people mean when they want to be called psychic is, "I have a certain world-view." Now there are people who use that term and really are trying to say to you, "Look, I have a lot of experiences that I cannot quite explain but, you know the best way I can say it is to use this shorthand term and then hope that you will know what I mean, which is a really deep, personal, meaningful, powerful, and beautiful thing." But that is not how it is going to be taken by the person who is listening and thinking about a fortune teller sitting in a tent with a crystal ball or some other offensive image. ... The people who say to you, "I am a psychic," let us face it you do cringe a little, don't you? Don't you worry? Aren't you skeptical? The next thing you say is, "Prove it," or "What do you mean?" or "Who do you think you are?" So it is not a good thing for them either...

...What I would say as a clinician to a person who approached me [claiming to be psychic] would be, "Look, you are not fooling me. I know that certain things exist that we do not have an explanation for yet. I think they do; they seem to. Either that or I will be really fascinated to know how I have been fooling myself all these years and that will be clinically fascinating. But why do you want to call yourself a psychic? What are you getting out of this? Why are you taking on that identity? What are you trying to explain? What are you trying to say about who you are? What are you trying to say about who you are in relation to other people? And what do you mean by that term because other people who use it mean a lot of different things?" I would really work seriously and in major ways clinically with a person who wants to take on that persona as a way to deal with other people in their life. It is not healthy.

...At some point...we want to know what is real and what is imagined. The trouble is that given the current state of psi research, we know very little about what is going on except that there is this process we call psi or extended abilities and it seems to manifest on a widespread basis in people's lives. A lot of the problems that come up for people have to do with how we, as a culture and as scientists, respond to that situation......On a clinical level...asking whether or not an experience involves "real" psi is not the most important question. The most important question is how the individual will deal with this real or imagined encounter — which means this real experience — in the context of his or her own life. It most certainly is extremely helpful, in making that determination, to know if genuine psi is involved. But we do not always know the answer to that question.
Keith Harary

...Hypnotic ability and fantasy proneness correlate only .25; therefore, "fantasy proneness" is not a reliable indicator of hypnotic ability. About 1/3 of non-fantasizers can be classified as high hypnotic ability persons...High hypnotic ability people and "fantasy addicts" are not necessarily the same people...

...Standard measures of hypnotizability are a composite of at least two uncorrelated or orthogonal factors. One factor is the capacity to self-generate fantasy of hallucinatory intensity. This factor correlates approximately .50 with standardized tests of hypnotic ability (e.g. the Stanford scales). The second factor is a capacity "to make the mind blank" (Hilgard, 1982) and is related to post-hypnotic amnesia. This second factor appears to be a cognitive and/or sensory inhibition factor.

Clearly the capacity to generate rich fantasy is related to subjective psi verbal reports. On the other hand, *objective* psi (empirically verifiable) performance may be related more closely to the second factor in hypnotic ability, the capacity to make the mind blank...Investigations of objective psi should use all appropriate experimental controls for psi and focus on superior hypnotic subjects, selected particularly for superior performance on the second factor (mind blank factor) in hypnotic ability.
Ian Wickramasekera

Alternate World Syndrome (AWS)

by Michael Heim

Michael Heim is a philosopher who has written books about the digital revolution (Electric Language, Yale U. Press, 1987) and more recent developments (The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality, Oxford U. Press, 1993). He consults for the computer industry and has organized six Virtual Reality conferences in Washington, D.C. for military, government, and industry. In the coming year, he will teach a seminar at the graduate school of the Art Center School for Design in Pasadena and at California State University Dominguez Hills. In Fall 1993, he taught "Careers in Virtual Reality" at the Cal State University Long Beach Extension. Michael Heim is also the translator of Martin Heidegger's The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic, and he also instructs in the internal martial arts of Tai Chi and Pa Kua. He can be reached at 310-542-1199 or at Internet address mheim@csulb.edu.

The snow assails your windshield relentlessly. The car's headlights show almost nothing about the highway under you. You can only guess where the lanes are, where the shoulder begins, where the exit ramps might be. The blizzard has so iced the road that you crawl along at 5 miles per hour, passing shaken fellow travelers whose cars sit stranded in the night, headlights dim, on both sides of the road.

Hours later, you flop exhausted on the motel bed, tension tightening your shoulder and forehead muscles. You close your eyes. On the back of your eyelids, you see again, in startlingly exact detail, the swirling snowflakes, the headlights, the windshield wipers fighting the moisture — all in slow motion this very minute.

Such flashbacks, waking nightmares with lucidity, typically belong to the first experiences with virtual reality technology. Subtract the terror and sore muscles and you get an idea of how it feels after spending an hour or two in a virtual environment. Even the next day, your optical nerves preserve the virtual world, so you can summon it with the slightest effort — or sometimes experience unsummoned flashes of virtual reality.

U.S. Pilots in the Persian Gulf War practiced mission rehearsals in virtual reality. They speak of deja-vu experiences during their actual missions. Not only during the missions, but afterwards too, their visual and auditory memories mix virtual and actual.

I investigated this dark side of VR in my recent book The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality (Oxford University Press, 1993). Research on pilots' experiences led me to develop the notions of Alternate World Syndrome and Alternate World Disorder as part of the dark side.

I built these two notions by analogy with the widely known phenomenon of simulator sickness. Pilots get nauseous and disoriented whenever the perceived motion of the simulator gets out of sync with the actual physical movement of the pilot's body. Even though the pilot may not consciously notice the discrepancy, the pilot's autonomic nervous system reacts to the "barfogenic zone." By analogy, the VR systems with head-mounted displays often create a time lag between the user's head movements and the motion registered on the computer displays. The discrepancy creates an uneasy feeling.

If the user spends hours in a virtual reality system, the discrepancy shifts to another level. On that level, the lag is no longer between head-mounted display and user's eye movement. (The latest systems have smoother hardware.) A deeper problem arises. The lag is not between the body functioning within the computer system but between the virtual body and the biological body in general. The lag is no longer synchronous within the virtual experience but rather diachronic. The lag occurs when the virtual world later intrudes on the actual world, or vice versa. AWS is simulator sickness writ large. AWS is technology sickness, a lag between the natural and artificial environments.

AWS comes from immersion in the virtual world. Immersion is the key feature of VR systems. The technology immerses the user in the entities and events of the computer-generated world. During immersion, the user's nervous system undergoes re-calibration and re-training to respond to the virtual environment. But this adaptation to technology cannot proceed smoothly when the virtual world continues to inject hallucinatory afterimages in the primary world.

Observe someone coming out of a VR system. Just watch the first hand movements. Invariably, the user stands in place, takes in the surroundings, and uses hands to pat torso and buttocks — as if to secure a firm landing and a return to presence in the primary body. Returning from the virtual world, the user feels a lag. The lag is the discrepancy between the virtual and the biological body. The virtual body still lingers in the afterimages and the newly formed neural pathways while the primary body resumes its involvement in the actual, non-virtual world.

A conflict of attention, not unlike jet lag, arises between the cyberbody and the biobody. The conflict reveals an ontological rift where the felt world swings out of kilter. Even experienced users feel the conflict. Dr. Stephen Ellis, scientist at NASA / Ames and at the UC Berkeley School of Optics, says that his work in VR often has him unconsciously gesturing in the primary world in ways that function in the virtual world. He points a finger half expecting to fly (as his cyberbody does under the conventions of the virtual world). The biobody adapts to the cyberworld and then needs to be re-calibrated for the primary world.

In The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality, I defined AWS (Alternate World Syndrome) as an acute form of body amnesia occurring in VR users. AWD (Alternate World Disorder) I defined as a chronic form of AWS where frequent virtuality leaves the user with a serious rupture of the kinesthetic from the visual senses of self-identity. With Alternate World Disorder, images and expectations from an alternate world so distort our functioning in the current world, that we have an increased likelihood of making errors. The virtual world obtrudes upon our functioning in the primary world, and vice versa. Responses deeply ingrained in the one world fail to correspond to the other world. AWD shows the human being merging, yet still out of phase, with the machine.

Virtual reality is rapidly becoming a key for understanding contemporary culture. It may reveal more about our contemporary lives and afflictions than traditional psychiatry. Years ago, philosophers of civilization like John Dewey noticed "an internecine warfare between the functions of the brain / nervous system and the functions of digestion, circulation, and respiration." They saw technology afflicting us not so much as external HAL or Frankenstein monsters but as a source of inner conflict brought by the complexity of this stage of human evolution. Write this conflict large and you have AWS and AWD.

UFO abduction belongs, I think, to the current stage of our evolutionary destiny. It belongs to the rocky marriage of human and technology. The psychopathology of abduction reveals another aspect of what is writ large in AWS and AWD. The hallucinatory intrusion of technology belongs to the unsteady, out-of-phase grafting of technology on the human species. Virtual Reality gives us a clue to the UFO experience because VR represents the culmination of the artificial, technology-driven world which we already inhabit but which we have not yet assimilated. We still experience our technological selves as alien visitors.

Cyberspace is rapidly encompassing outer space. At NASA, the exploration of outer space is becoming indistinguishable from electronic adventure. Virtual reality allow cybernauts to explore the terrain of Mars. Soon, VR systems linked to telerobotic vehicles will provide real-time interaction with many parts of the planetary system. The dream of exploring outer space may take place both inside and outside the VR dream machine.

In the glossary to The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality, under the entry "virtual reality" I wrote the following: "Virtual Reality convinces the participant that he or she is actually in another place, by substituting the normal sensory input received by the participant with information produced by a computer" (p. 180).The psychiatrist, Robert Romanyshyn, recently made an important point by altering my definition slightly. He made two substitutions: "Dreams [instead of VR technology] convince the participant that he or she is actually in another place, by substituting the normal sensory input received by the participant with unconscious wishes and desires [instead of information produced by a computer]."In other words, VR parallels our dream life.

My suggestions for treating out-of-phase victims of AWS and AWD center around somatic movement. My work as a teacher of Tai Chi Chuan convinces me that certain Asian traditions have preserved some most effective techniques for re-integrating the conscious mind with the primary body. On many occasions, I have urged VR developers to build into their systems a Tai Chi decompression chamber. A certain number of hours spent in virtual worlds should be balanced by a corresponding number of minutes moving under the direction of a virtual Tai Chi master. Treatments for AWS or AWD can range from de-linking exercises in cyberspace to more demanding disciplines, such as the daily practice of Tai Chi or Yoga. These disciplines, modified for homo technicus, can restore the integrity of somatic experience.

Human presence will be stretched more and more in the coming century. In the fascination and pain of the UFO experience, we see only the first glimpses of our ultimate merger with technology.

Contribution and Subscription Information

Bulletin of Anomalous Experience is a networking newsletter about the UFO abduction phenomenon and related issues, for mental health professionals and interested scientists. BAE is a forum for presentation of ideas and information, and debate of same. Comments on anything you see here, brief or lengthy, are encouraged. So are opinion pieces, and notices of books, articles or journals you think are relevant to this field. Participate!

Our editorial policy was best described by Hilary Evans, who said we try to "comfortably tread the narrow path between the groves of academia and the dust and heat of the marketplace, inquiring and suggesting, not asserting or insisting." We publish most anything, whether we agree with it or not, as long as it's on topic.

Material for publication in computer-readable format is especially welcome . I can accept 3.5" or 5.25" diskettes. I run Word for Windows 2.0, but you can also send files in ASCII format. (Macintosh users: I don't have a Mac-to-PC conversion program, so please send files that are readable on an IBM system). If you are online, you can also e-mail material to me at my Internet address (see below).

Subscriptions are $25 per calendar year (6 bimonthly issues); back issues are also available at $25 per calendar year. Remit in U.S. funds for U.S. and foreign orders, and Canadian funds for Canadian orders. Make cheques or money orders payable to "David Gotlib, M.D.", *not* to BAE.

Send contributions to BAE, or requests for subscriptions, to
David Gotlib, M.D.
Bulletin of Anomalous Experience
2 St. Clair Avenue West, Suite 607
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4V 1L5
Telephone (416) 963-8700
Fax (416) 962-4622
Internet drdave@io.org

UFO Abductions and Race Fear

by Steve Mizrach

Steve Mizrach is a Master's candidate in cultural anthropology at the University of Florida. His essay "Seeing Things: The Meaningfulness of 'Mass Hallucination'" appeared in BAE 5.1.

In the 1990s, we seem to be confronting two mysterious parallel social tremors. Lest anyone think that the UFO abduction panic has been driven into hiding by accusations of overeager hypnotists implanting false memories, they need only to turn to the recent Roper Poll (admittedly extremely flawed in its interpretation) to see that the numbers of people believing themselves to be abductees is growing exponentially. The other social tremor which some people seem to think has vanished from our "enlightened" and "colorblind" society is a continuing anxiety over interracial marriage and "cross-breeding" of the races.

As many people know, it is often the case that what the conscious mind claims it has integrated and accepted may still provoke unconscious hostility. Hence movies like "Jungle Fever" which remind us just how close precarious feelings about interracial dating are to some social fault line. Recently, a Southern principal tried to cancel a high school prom because of what he perceived to be "widespread" interracial dating, and told an interracial child that she was a "mistake" that her parents "never should have had." In both North and South (just look at Bensonhurst), white accusations still flow like a torrent whenever a black man is seen coming too close to a white woman.

As an anthropologist, I know full well that the biological basis of much of what is believed about "race" is quite dubious. All of us belong to one race, the human race, because all humans can successfully breed with each other, and produce offspring that are still fertile — as opposed to, say, the mating of horses and donkeys which produces mules. But race is a critical social construct, which informs many aspects of what people think and believe about their fellow humans. In the U.S., it is quite clear that (unlike Latin America) race is deeply polarizing and dichotomous. No intermediate shades or gradations are permitted. Either you're white, or you're not. If you've got even a drop of "black blood" (though, of course, all blood is red), then you're black, at least according to the laws in many Southern states. As one Southerner once pointed out, "If you take white paint, and mix in just a tiny drop of black, it's not white anymore..."

Are these two parallel social currents connected? Here I will attempt to argue that they are. Precisely because most people don't believe in the reality of UFO abductions, and refuse to recognize the reality of continued social disapproval of "race mixing," (in both the white and black communities — the latter starting to increasingly voice protest over adoptions of black children by white families) both of these currents are somewhat "underground," and may not be dealt with by social scientists as much as they should be. Possible connections have been especially ignored.

The UFO abduction researcher James Pontolillo has made a great contribution to the literature in his Demons, Doctors, and Aliens, released by RDM Publications. Pontolillo points out the connections between the UFO abduction panic and two earlier episodes — the "witch craze" in Europe from the 15th-18th centuries, and the "white slavery" panic in the late 19th and early 20th. I find it interesting that the central factor in both panics was concern over the control of women's reproduction and the fear that they were mating with "outsiders" of some kind. Many nationalist writers have often called women the "guardians of the race" — i.e. it is their task to reproduce the nation, physically and culturally.

During the "witch craze" period, there were many accusations that women (and men) were performing sorcery or committing blasphemy against Christian symbols and doctrine. However, the overarching concern of the inquisitors (in such typical works as the Malleus Maleficarum) seemed to be the "consorting" of women with incubi and demons after being whisked off to their Sabbats. Questions always seemed to focus on the size and feel of the Devil's "member," and as to whether the women preferred the demons to mortal lovers. There was some argument over the matter, but it was generally felt that the result of such intercourse would be "demon children," and so when their mothers were burned, many of their children went into the pyre also. (Interestingly, this era in European history was one in which racial stereotypes were first beginning to emerge, largely due to greater contacts (and intermarriage) between Europeans and Moors, Indians, Turks, Asians, and so on.) It was thought that demon-human intercourse inevitably produced marks — the so-called "witches' teat," between the anus and vagina — which inquisitors sought with pins and other painful implements.

During the "white slavery" panic of the early 20th century, it was thought that swarthy foreigners were kidnapping white women and selling them into slavery in foreign lands. Once again, moral outrage seemed to be directed not at these rumored acts of kidnapping and sale. It was that these non-Europeans were impregnating white women and making them bear interracial children, and the implication in many cases was that the women were consenting to it willingly. That this was a nativist period in American history was fairly clear. It was a time when the eugenics movement was picking up force, and anti-immigrant hostility against Eastern and Southern Europeans was causing many immigration restrictions to be passed. One of the effects of the "white slavery" panic was that it gave men a tighter rein over their wives — after all, if they didn't stay in the home, some wicked foreigner might kidnap them and take them off to Frodobia.

Both episodes show a certain psychic similarity. Both occurred in periods when white Europeans (or "WASP/Euro-Americans") were starting to become concerned about women becoming involved with nonwhite men. Abram Kardiner, in his Psychological Anthropology texts, suggested that many of the systems of myth and folklore in a society can be seen as symbolic projections of experiences from

childhood or other anxieties. The "witch craze" and "white slavery" panics both involve symbolic concerns over the coming of "outsiders" carrying off women and breeding with them. Anyone who has not already noted the parallel with UFO abductions may not have been awake for the last ten years.

Budd Hopkins, John Mack, David Jacobs, and other UFO investigators have been strongly promoting the "hybridization hypothesis" of UFO abductions. The "Grays" are supposedly kidnapping women and impregnating them, then returning nine months later to steal the fetuses before they can be born. The Grays are apparently doing so in an effort to revitalize their genetic pool, creating some sort of "hybrid race" from mixing with us. The issue of how such reproduction can be possible — considering the existing genetic differences that must exist between the "aliens" and us — is glossed over. What I find most interesting, of course, is this color: gray is the color you get when you mix black and white together.

Though UFO abductions do appear to be an international phenomenon, the lion's share of cases seem to come from Anglo-Saxon-rooted countries like the United States, England, South Africa, and Australia. Interestingly, all of these countries face race problems — whether it be with Aborigines, African-Americans, Zulu and Xhosa, or Caribbean blacks from the commonwealth. In the Third World, many people from these First World countries commonly encounter "organ removal" panics. Rumors have spread like wildfire that Americans in Guatemala are kidnapping small children and "harvesting" their organs for transplants. The similarity between these panics and UFO abductions should also be fairly obvious.

The connection between the UFO phenomenon itself (long before the current wave of abductions) and race is curious and bizarre. Many of the first group of UFO "contactees" — who went aboard the flying saucers willingly, to make love to gorgeous Venusians (but never producing offspring) — were loosely affiliated with the "Silver Shirt" movement of the 30s and 40s, a sort of homegrown American fascism which, among other things, opposed Roosevelt and WW II.

The 50s contactees seemed to report that the majority of the saucer pilots were "Aryans" — long-haired, blonde, tall beings from Venus or other planets in the solar system. The "Aryans," when not warning humanity about atomic war, often gave messages promoting race harmony, but softly warning against racial intermixture and the "population explosion" of the Third World masses...

There has been a lot written about the UFO-Nazi connection. Some of the Nazi elite are thought to have held the theory that there was a hidden race deep within the Earth (the masters of the Vril) which they could make contact with through the poles. One of the early theories about UFOs was that they were craft piloted by Nazis who had fled after WW II and made contact with this race within the hollow earth (an idea that Ray Palmer, UFOlogy's "father," often assented to). Today, there are groups of neo-Nazis who believe that the different races of the planet were "seeded" in various geographical locales by different alien groups, and charged with competing for planetary dominance...

These Neo-Nazi groups are obsessed with the idea of extraterrestrial "bloodlines" in human groups. Many think that "star seed" people are descendants of the Celtic races — Basques, Irish, Welsh, Bretons, etc. — and that one of the hallmarks of their extraterrestrial origin is the Rh Negative blood type. The migrations of the Celtic peoples were a result of "racial memory chromosomes" implanted by their ancestors. Some of this neo-Nazi literature suggests that the other "lower" races were the result of genetic experimentation by the aliens — attempts to crossbreed "pure" Aryan types with animals and other lifeforms.

It's amazing the degree to which racial nationalists of all kind have seized onto the UFO abduction phenomenon. In DC, I encountered a black nationalist at a fair whose table had literature linking the sinister "Grays" to the International Bankers' Conspiracy and the Zionist Peril. In a nutshell, this pamphlet merely restated the paranoid theories of 50s contactee John McCoy, suggesting that the "International Bankers" had made a deal with the aliens, the substance of which largely being that they would plan UFO abductions and sightings so as to create international financial panics which would allow them to grab up the world's currency.

That UFO abductions have something to do with race fear appears to be fairly plain. The U.S. is currently dealing with the fact that its white majority is decreasing, thus provoking all the debates about "multiculturalism." White supremacists take to the talkshow airwaves every day to proclaim the dangers of "race betrayal" by those who "miscegenate" and "pollute" the race. And Budd Hopkins tells us that women — the majority of whom are white and WASP, heartland, middle-America types — are being carried off by aliens to achieve a "hybridization" of them and us.

Yes, nonwhite men are abductees, too. Just look at Barney Hill. (The interesting thing about this case, to which many have pointed, is that his wife Betty was a white woman, and a civil-rights worker. The couple faced a great deal of hostility, and thus lived a semi-reclusive existence, due to their interracial marriage. It is curious that this case in 1961 pretty much "set off" the abduction wave which followed.) I think we must separate the abduction phenomenon from its interpretation by various groups. I have elsewhere suggested that UFO abductions may involve "real," if nonphysical experiences, and that they happen to all kinds of people.

However, what is curious to me is that the majority of abduction investigators have chosen to focus on white, middle-class women as abductees. They have chosen women because of their "hybridization" hypothesis - after all, just look at all those 40s and 50s sci-fi comics where the Green Martian is dragging off some poor housewife, kicking and screaming — and perhaps have ended up mostly focusing on white women because of certain class/race prejudices about the reliability of certain kinds of witnesses. They have chosen to focus on the sexual/reproductive aspects of abductions, and not to examine others... and to look for marks — scars, cuts, etc. — as the telltale stigma of abduction.

One other aspect of abductions that few people have pointed out, which is also reproductive in nature, is that mechanical devices are often used to achieve the result. Some people have reported alien-human intercourse. But

the majority of cases involve impregnation (or the removal of sperm/ova) through the use of some mechanical device. Some complex psychological phenomenon — perhaps growing anxiety over the impersonality of new fertility techniques or abortion — may be what is being "projected" here. However, I suspect it is linked to another unconscious anxiety — the growing unease that people are beginning to feel over the intersection of the mechanical and the human, (Just look at that classic movie "Demon Seed", where a computer rapes and impregnates a woman, giving birth to a "cyborg" baby).

This is an aspect of UFO abductions which these investigators have completely ignored. Their focus on the "hybridization hypothesis" shows the extent to which race fear may be one of the unconscious logics behind the UFO abduction panic. But I would urge other investigators to separate the panic from the phenomenon. Abductions have to do with more than just race fear. Something very complex is going on, just as was the case with the "witch mania" in Europe. While the inquisitions of that period have everything to do with the inquisitors' obsession with women's contact with demons, this is entirely separate from the question of what constituted the perhaps very real basis of the witch-cult. Margaret Murray suggested that the witches' religion was a survival of pre-Christian goddess worship and paganism. Other commentators think that many of the witches were simply midwives and herbalists who were resisting the growing dominance of male-practiced "physick" or medicine. The point is, other things were involved besides just male control of European women's reproduction. I think that the same thing can be said for the UFO abduction phenomenon. To say it is nothing but a projection of race fear and reproductive control is reductionist; but to ignore the role that race fear has played in its continuing interpretation is naive.

Some Spiritual Resonances In Encounter Recollections: Cognizance of the Pathology of Guilt, and Healing

Part 2 of 2

by Edward Carlos, Ph.D.

Edward Carlos, Ph.D. is a practising artist and professor of fine arts. Dr. Carlos co-authored a narrative of his encounter experiences with Dr. John Mack, which appears in Dr. Mack's new book Abduction, and has written about abductions for MUFON UFO Journal and CONTACT FORUM..

This is the concluding half of an essay which began in the previous issue of BAE.

Hillman writes about images of an archetypal or mythic nature that...

> ... the image is part of dream speech and that the sense of affliction, too, is as necessary a part of that speech as the feeling aspect of the metaphor. The affliction reflects a pathos, a being moved, or movement, now taking place in the psyche. Categories of positive and negative, health and disease do not apply. Instead we assume that something essential for the psyche's survival, its very life, and death, is being expressed in this manner and cannot be expressed with the same subtle and vital impact in any other way. (p. 22, Ibid.)

Hillman approaches psychic images as more than memory or perception, but he suggests that in a psychology of imagery there is a poetic basis of mind (p. 22, ibid., from chapter entitled 'The Poetic Basis of Mind'), which for him seems to mean that imagery is more conceptualized and mental relating to what is figured, perhaps prefigured, in the psyche as being archetypal. Archetypes are indefinable and nondescriptive by nature in any objective way, writes psychiatrist C.G. Jung, (p. 23, Ibid.) but rather are poetically, mythically, and metaphorically 'structurizing' or manifesting and given to images when experienced and expressed (ibid.)

Meaning is an essentiality for the soul, created as recognizable through imagery which is sensorily perceived, intellectually or mentally conceived, or otherwise recognized, initially, or brought to consciousness as memory. Our instinct for survival is rooted in our need for meaning (* a recommendation for reading: Viktor E. Frankl's "The Will to Meaning").

The experiential, perceptually sensed, memory of an encounter may be induced through hypnotic regression and may appear in juxtaposed time as momentary flashes of insightful memory despite questions which infer and insist on sequence within a given time. Another memory may interrupt another memory. But the imagery however actualized in hypnosis is essential experience 'once more' expressing itself through the encontrant's first-person experience, or it may be observable to the encontrant as a second-person experience.

The image 'tense' is dependent in part on whether the encontrant is responding to the hypnotherapist's queries for a description or if the encontrant is allowed (i.e., uninterrupted) to be available to the recalled imagery for those successive or otherwise images to flow and reenact as the authentic, emotional, original experience. Tense is also dependent on how deeply the hypnosis is experienced and at what level the verbal description intervenes on the experience emotionally and physically felt.

As an artist I realize that the essence of an experience is indeed expressible in various manners but the more authentic expression to me is when imagery is created as metaphor which is somewhat like the experiential aspect of the reencounter under hypnosis. Metaphor is not the

opposite of description, but description tends to be *about* something and becomes narrative, distant, and usually linear rather than be authentically emotional and within the radiating experience. Metaphor is not an abstracted likeness defined nor a similarity; nor is metaphor implicit sameness as in a grammatical context as it is so implied in academic, critical, situations, but rather metaphor as an act, as existential, is essential and more true to the whole of the experience. One tries, in creative expression as in art, to 'capture' the presence of that essence felt.

Metaphor, I believe, is the creatures' means of communication with human consciousness. Metaphor, however happening or induced, is as well the manner of human activity before and after an encounter occurs.

Metaphoric imagery is an experience of the soul radiating outwardly in a cosmic, spiritual sense which encompasses the individual who is caught up in the meaning experienced as an act. Larger than the life memory, as memory reenacted experientially, the artistic metaphor represents and yet encompasses that which it is (still, in the reactualization of the initial experience). Metaphor is of the nature of breathing with its components of inspiration and expiration, an actualization, an act ongoing. This implies that consciousness is matter, as part of the living, breathing, substances of flesh (or other materiality).

The encounter is laden with diverse images which come from the person's direct initial experience but which, like dreams, may be affected by the perceptual body memory, by the personal history of relationships, images, and symbols that one embodies as life experience. Yet memory images, dream-like or nightmare-like juxtaposed images, images of archetypal and mythic forms and other intellectualized conceptions, and sensed, perceived, objective images are all interwoven in the encounter remembered via hypnosis, just as they are in direct experience. In hypnosis, they neither enhance or contradict the experience, but instead enrich it with simultaneous layers.

Once the image has reappeared, however, it often remarkably becomes fastidiously steady as a recall and as an influence upon behavior; it becomes inescapable and frequently dominant, at least for a time. One attempts to 'authorize' the confusion engendered by the appearance of the image in one's consciousness, to make sense of it, to understand it, to lessen the emotional turmoil that is felt. The emotion of the experience is more relevant as an image being conversant with the psyche which produces it and with the initial experience by which as an external force the image had been engendered and bathed in consciousness (thereby available to consciousness later) than any delineating, defining attempt or logical or rational aspect.

Other encontrants with whom I correspond realize spiritual (and for some creative) beneficience especially where repetitive encounters occur. Over the long period of time in an individual's experiencing more than one encounter, a positive developmental character was sensed, sought, or otherwise encouraged once the initiatory examinations with the terror felt was made cognizant.

Cognition enables one to get past the trauma. First, however, awarenesses were heightened, despite the ongoing trauma with accentuations of moods invoked by these awarenesses. Always an adjustment is being made to the prevalence of imagery of encounters.

Once a realization that encounters are occurring, the emotion of terror leads to at least two levels of awareness. One is within the initial experience which becomes for awhile unconscious, but affecting; the other involves memory which produces affects instigating conscious fear anew and/or inducing a state of confusion. Residual anger is evoked, a lashing out at whatever is handy to assuage the disturbances of not fully knowing what is happening.

While recognizing the horror which the fear engenders, and subsequent anger and obsession evoked by encounters along with their examinations, one sometimes experiences transformations and transfigurations of less fearsome natures. These changes, although involving bodily pain, nausea, and a sense of extreme heat and itchiness, suggest a spiritual and natural content. Although 'new' to human physicality the imagic depth and manner of occurrence seem almost ritualistic (in the manner, say, by which hospital visitations become ritualistic as to function and environmental restrictions, or preparations for Sunday church services and brunches, talking outside the church after the service, are part of a ritual for many people week in and week out, etc.) We tend to habitualize and ritualize our normative actions regardless of the nature of activity.

Anguish is intensified as denials occur from attempts to disclose or discuss the feelings and imagery being provoked, but the sense of spiritual cognizance is not diminished.

Because of various misunderstandings about encounters which I recognized while reading the general ufology literature, this essay ultimately concerns those neglected spiritual potentialities commensurate with emotional responses and consequential development of insights especially from repetitive encounters. I am accepting of the pathologizing of which James Hillman theorizes and in the open manner by which he frames the thought of pathology as an aspect of psychological health. By addressing what one has to recognize as necessary for a certain healing to be animated it is possible and probable that recovery and healing from that initial period of confusion will occur. From this freedom of guilt, a determination to explore and to express by one manner or another will follow.

A reflective attitude might prove to be a solace for encontrants especially those in their dawning realizations of consciousness and memory and one might remain a bit skeptical especially in reading that we all are possessed by imaginative mass hallucinations and fantasies or that we are all 'victims' of an external alien force. At some point while exploring the phenomenon an encontrant will have to deal with where participation becomes an aspect of the encounter sequences, and one realizes one must become determined and active, rather than passive. This realization is consequential. One becomes a spiritual warrior of sorts; speaking about the experience is a concomitant of that realization.

The urge toward making connections between psychic deliberation and physical substantiality may then act as a means to human spiritual transcendence, whereby a sense

of a spiritual ecology (participant with a growing environmental and cosmic awareness) evokes an atonement of sorts, a sense of being at-one-with-nature as we can know it at the level of cognition and realization each of us is. Inherent recognitions of our primal participation with nature occur. We recognize that we are within a physical-cosmic and psychic-spiritual force through the elevation of consciousness.

Spiritual transformation is part of an elemental cosmic consciousness permeating our space, as inclusive (microscopically) as we wish to make it and as extensive as we perceive it — galactic, even. The mainstream of spiritual action involves a natural ecology that involves our larger galactic cosmos as well as the smaller cosmos of our physical existence.

Yet, we tend to ideologize, abstractly conceptualize, and rationalize our relationships to each other and the world. We abstract truths from the living matter promulgating an external and objective quality *about* which we *react*. Reacting is only a dim possibility of responsive and cohesive responsibility. These differences become insistent. The encounter experience, for me ultimately, has meant an insight into my personal responsibility to myself and to others as rightful action, as much as one can manage. The spiritual understanding of responsibility is substantially beyond one's own self and personal satisfaction, a way of substantiating the guilt of being but without succumbing to the negative aspects of such metaphysical guilt. The spiritual atonement goes beyond family, beyond friends, beyond societal relationships in general. The new paradigm is cosmic in spirit.

In another article, "The Spiritual Turf of Encounter Rites and Initiations: Some Commongrounds in the Stages of Discovery and Development," I state:

> The encounter phenomenon is interesting right now for what we are beginning to consciously discern of its actualization as a presence in our natural lives. Our curiosity demands our wanting to know more about what this means and who we are. We are willing to take the risks despite its being normatively weird, physically irregular, delimiting scientifically as we today know science, artistically almost inexpressive (but some of us are trying to assuage the images pouring through us), psychically irrational (not nonrational, definitely not rational), emotionally frightening, and spiritually creative. The process of discovery becomes or is ultimately a spiritual journey which we find we are already on, and recovery is only a beginning ending of the journey. (*2)

With the strangeness of the images we initially, often, feel overwhelmed and traumatized by a dawning recognition of the encounter events. We try to familiarize the images in various manners. We try to attend to the experience by tentatively sharing. Despite the probability of ridicule and other victimization procedures, whether scientifically, governmentally, or hypno-psychologically oriented, whether somehow initiated by alien-induced 'tricks' or studies, or whether debunking by just plain warped human beings, one realizes one must explore the meanings and potentialities, and express the findings regardless.

The images become obsessive once they appear to you; they are tenacious in their grip on your intelligence and your emotions. They cling to you and you find yourself clinging to them as a justification of this strange experience and to understand better the interferences with your norm of perception and activity. To speak in terms of positive and negative, as Hillman suggests with pathologized imagery, these images do fit the pathologizing and the guilt that accompanies these.

Akin to encounter imagery which initially appears so psychically death-like to the soul, we read in The Tibetan Book of the Dead, in Chogyam Trungpa's "Commentary" on "The Great Liberation Through Hearing in the Bardo" which addresses similar haunting images:

> The bardo experience can be seen in terms of the six realms of existence that we go through, the six realms of our psychological states. .... (The gods or deities) appear as peaceful, wrathful, and as messengers, presenting themselves in all sorts of terrifying and revolting fashions. The details ... are very much what happens in our daily living situation, they are not just psychedelic experiences or visions that appear after death. These experiences can be seen purely in terms of the living situation; that is what we are trying to work on. In other words, the whole thing is based on another way of looking at the psychological picture of ourselves in terms of a practical meditative situation. Nobody is going to save us, everything is left purely to the individual, the commitment to whom we are. Gurus or spiritual friends might instigate that possibility, but fundamentally they have no function. (p. 2, Translation with commentary by Francesca Fremantle and Chogyam Trungpa, The Tibetan Book of the Dead)

This is a significant comment because the bardo imagery is ultimately similar to the depths of imagery in the encounter phenomenon and the imagery is a catalyst to spiritual cognition. The encontrant will realize that the same basis of function is evident in terms of hypnotherapists, researchers, article writers, and even other encontrants, friends, and family. One realizes the inherent aloneness of the human situation in terms of the soul despite the equally inherent value of relationship. Yet, there is that other connection to all things, in terms of the soul, that cosmic fusion with all that exists (always contemporaneously) and which is transcendental, timeless, aspatial, and of the great Now.

The images and processes in this great, ancient, spiritual guide (a concomitant encounter sensibility) offered a certain validity to my own imagery which includes metamorphoses from substantive human form transformed into the eternality of endless space and into the timelessness and restless energy of awesome light. Reading once more of imagery and process in The Tibetan Book of the Dead provided reflective insights such as metaphorical imagery being sometimes symbolic as a means of nonverbal communication on the basis of the creatures. Communication belies a reversal of form for its own sake; rather, syntheses at all levels are dissolved into constituent elements as interacting matters constituently in relationship to each other.

Metaphor in such imagery is a reality. Metaphor is the reality of presence and essence. I came to know a concomitant resolution of much stress and a relieving of the trauma of amnesia with its blocks when grasping the spirit in and of the image. Other confirmations and uncanny encounters occurred bending my conscious life towards a visionary creative existence with an intensive aesthetic bent, intensifying an awareness of the implication of the image as a psychic event. Creativity has been a revelatory nourishment in my soul experience throughout my life, the arts along with nature as a concomitant inspiration and motivational intent being the basic fibers woven into my own artistic expressions. Creativity implies by nature the process of consciousness (and it may or may not be developed in artistic processes). Inspiration is spiritually ladened despite whatever realm of ingenuity is evoked.

If taken psychologically (and if at all possible affirmatively rather than reductively), if acknowledging the pathologizing necessity of its imagery and the concomitant beneficence despite the intellectual and emotional difficulties, and if grasping the confirming spirit of the Tao within the imagery, then the encounter phenomenon is ultimately a healing reconciliation with a larger world.

(Footnote appears on Page 24)

From the Scientific Literature

Persinger's Corner

Geophysican Variables and Behavior: LXXIV. Man-Made Fluid Injections into the Crust and Reports of Luminous Phenomena (UFO Reports) — Is the Strain Field an Aseismically Propagating Hydrological Pulse?
MA Persinger and JS Derr
Perceptual and Motor Skills, 1993, 77, 1059-1065

According to the tectonic strain theory, both earthquakes and most reports of UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) or odd luminous phenomena are generated by local transient changes in regional crustal stress. Because the injection (or containment) of fluids or their percolation into the upper crust can trigger earthquakes, we predicted that reports of these anomalous luminous phenomena should display temporal lags and spatial diffusion around these sites. The hypothesis was supported around the five test sites of Derby, Colorado; Attica, New York; Rangely, Colorado; Sanford (Amarillo), Texas; and Hanford, Washington. The results support the hypothesis that luminous phenomena, often described by the contemporary label of UFOs, are associated with natural hydroseismicity and can be initiated by man-made activity.

Geophysical Variables and Behavior: LXXV. Possible Increased Incidence of Brain Tumors Following an Episode of Luminous Phenomena
Carole Bisson and MA Persinger
Perceptual and Motor Skills, 1993, 77, 1088-1090

If the tectonic strain theory for luminous phenomena be correct, then significant electromagnetic emissions and radon gas release should occur in focal regions in which people report an alleged "UFO flap." Considering the epidemiological evidence that these stimuli might promote the incidence of brain tumors, their occurrence during the 5 years before and the 5 years after the November, 1975 episode of multiple luminous displays within the Sudbury Basin (Canada) was examined. Compared to the adjacent control area, there was a significant increase in brain tumors after the episode for men (conservative odds ratio = 2.5) but not for women; however, the magnitude was well within the expected range of incidence within the general population. Such changes have theoretical implication but may have little clinical or health significance.

Intensity of amnesia during hypnosis is positively correlated with estimated prevalence of sexual abuse and alien abductions: Implications for the False Memory Syndrome.
TL Dittburner and MA Persinger
Perceptual and Motor Skills, 1993, 77(3 Pt 1):895-8

20 normal young women listened to an ambiguous story concerning a young boy who experienced fear, odd smells, and a smothering sensation during the night and skin lesions the next morning. After the Hypnotic Induction Profile (HIP) had been established, they were asked to estimate either the percentage prevalence of childhood sexual abuse or alien abduction in the general population. There were moderate (0.50) positive correlations between the subjects' estimates of prevalence and the amount of amnesia ("lost time") and indices of right-hemispheric anomalies (history of sensed presence and left-ear suppressions during a dichotic-listening task). Relevance of observations to formation of the False Memory Syndrome and to the development of nonpsychotic delusions is discussed.

Elicitation of "Childhood Memories" in Hypnosis-Like Settings is Associated With Complex Partial Epileptic-Like Signs for Women but Not For Men: Implications for the False Memory Syndrome
MA Persinger
Perceptual and Motor Skills, 1994, 78, 643-651

20 male and 20 female undergraduate students were exposed singly for 20 min. to an exotic setting (partial sensory deprivation and weak, bilateral trans-temporal pulsed magnetic fields) that enhances relaxation and exotic experiences. The numerical incidence of subjective experiences described as old memories, dreams, emotions, or vestibular sensations did not differ significantly between the sexes; however, women who reported a greater prevalence of preexperimental complex partial epileptic-like signs were more likely to report experiences of "old memories" ($r=0.61$) while men who exhibited these signs were more likely to report dream-like ($r=0.49$) experiences. Because complex partial epileptic-like signs are positively associated with suggestibility, the potential contribution of this differential gender effect to the etiology of the False Memory Syndrome requires further investigation.

Recent Abstracts

Abductions and Sexual Abuse

Thematic Content Analyses of the Reports of UFO Abductees and Close Encounter Witnesses: Indications of Repressed Sexual Abuse
Susan Marie Powers
Journal of UFO Studies, n.s. 5, 1994, 35-54
Twenty alleged extraterrestrial abductees participated in a study exploring the presence of dissociative and posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms. Two comparison groups of 20 sightees and 20 sexually abused persons provided comparative data. Interviews and questionnaires elicited detailed accounts from the abductee group, and thematic content analysis rendered three predominant themes of 1) being chosen; 2) missing time; and 3) bodily intrusions. Results showed that 45% of the abductee population manifested PTSD symptoms and 70% of the abductees manifested dissociative symptomatology. The three themes in the thematic analysis suggest that sexual abuse may be at the root of some of the abduction stories.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Prevalence of Traumatic Events and Post-Traumatic Psychological Symptoms in a Nonclinical Sample of College Students.
Scott Vrana and Dean Lauterback
J Traumatic Stress 1994, April; Vol 7 No 2, p. 289-302

The lifetime prevalence of traumatic events and their psychological impact were assessed in 440 undergraduate students. Eight-four percent of the subjects reported experiencing at least one event of sufficient intensity potentially to elicit Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). One-third of the sample had experienced four or more traumatic events. Subjects who had experienced trauma reported higher levels of depression, anxiety, and PTSD symptomatology than nontraumatized subjects, and these symptoms were more intense in subjects who experienced multiple traumas. Events that were particularly negative in their impact included unwanted sexual experiences and events that subject reported were too traumatic to discuss openly. Events that could not be discussed ("can't tell"), abuse as a child, rape, and abuse as an adult are associated with the highest levels of post-traumatic stress symptoms. The prevalence of traumatic experiences in this college sample are similar to results found for psychiatric outpatients and inpatients. Females were more distressed than were males by witnessing a violent death or injury; however, males were more affected than females by child abuse and by events they could not discuss. Because not disclosing or confronting traumatic events can have negative psychological and physiological consequences it may be especially important to screen males for traumatic experiences and to encourage them to confront the experience through talking or writing.

Epidemiology

Age differences in mystical experience
JS Levin
Gerontologist 33(4), August 1993, 507-13

Age differences are examined in reports of deja vu, ESP, clairvoyance, spiritualism, and numinous experience. According to the 1988 General Social Survey (N = 1481), these mystical experiences are somewhat more common now than in 1973, and deja vu, clairvoyance, and a composite mysticism score have increased with successively younger age cohorts. Further, private and subjective religiosity are positively related to overall mystical experience, while organizational religiosity is inversely related.

Hypnosis

Suggestibility and Repressed Memories of Abuse: A Survey of Psychotherapists' Beliefs
Michael D. Yapko
Amer J Clin Hyp 36(3), January 1994, 163-171

The mental health field is deeply divided in its views regarding the possibility of creating false memories of sexual abuse through suggestive procedures. Psychotherapists in clinical practice were surveyed regarding their views on memory and hypnosis in order to assess how their perspectives might influence their clinical methods. Survey data regarding hypnosis and suggestibility indicate that while psychotherapists largely view hypnosis favorably, they often do so on the basis of misinformation. A significant number of psychotherapists erroneously believe, for example, that memories obtained through hypnosis are more likely to be accurate than those simply recalled, and that hypnosis can be used to recover accurate memories even from as far back as birth. Such misinformed views can lead to misapplications of hypnosis when attempting to actively recover memories of presumably repressed episodes of abuse, possibly resulting in the recovery of suggested rather than actual memories.

A Case of the Psychotherapist's Fallacy: Hypnotic Regression to "Previous Lives"
Ian Stevenson
Amer J Clin Hyp 36(3), January 1994, 188-193

(no abstract with this article; excerpts from article appear below)

...I do not understand why the mistaken idea developed that derepressing the memory of an apparent or actual traumatic cause of a phobia melts the phobia away. Every psychiatrist has had some experience of a person who, for example, injured or frightened in a vehicular accident, will not ride in an automobile again for months or even years. These persons know the cause of their phobia, but it persists anyway. Closer to the present topic, 36% of a group of 387 children who claimed to remember previous lives suffered from phobias, which nearly always corresponded to the mode of death in the life of the deceased person whose life the child claimed to remember (Stevenson, 1990). Leave aside the

question of whether these children remembered real previous lives. (For evidence on that point I refer readers to detailed case reports [Stevenson, 1966/1974] and a general survey of the research on these children [Stevenson, 1987].) The point here is that I have studied the cases of a large number of young children who claimed to know what circumstances in a previous life — usually a violent death — had generated a phobia and yet, despite their knowledge, they suffered from the phobia.

Must we then conclude that because nearly all hypnotically induced "previous lives" are manifestly bogus, these hypnotherapists do not help their patients? Certainly not. Many of them, perhaps most of them, are probably good psychotherapists capable of mobilizing the nonspecific factors in psychotherapy. Their mistake is the fallacy of attributing the patient's improvement to the particular technique adopted.

Yet I would not have any hypnotherapist disbelieve in the efficacy of what he or she is doing. Successful psychotherapy depends on the circular reinforcement of the patient's belief that he or she can be helped and the psychotherapist's belief that he or she can help (Frank & Frank, 1991; Rosenthal, 1969). If a practitioner of hypnotic regression to previous lives should become skeptical about the value of this technique, the therapist should quit at once or take up some other technique.

Patients may also benefit from the strong emotions often aroused during the seeming reliving of a previous life. This, however, also offers no evidence of the authenticity of the events described, and the benefit may come through reciprocal inhibition (Wolpe, 1958). If the subjects seem to experience an event from an imagined past that parallels a present phobia or other symptom — which, given the loading of suggestions, can hardly fail to happen — the relaxation induced and the reassurance offered by the psychotherapist's confidence may counteract the ability of noxious stimuli to excite a phobic or other neurotic response.

These remarks would remain incomplete if I did not mention that rarely — very rarely — something of evidential value emerges during attempts to evoke previous lives during hypnosis. I have myself published reports of two cases in which hypnotized subjects spoke responsively in foreign languages that I am convinced they had not learned normally (Stevenson, 1974, 1984). I think the subject of The Search for Bridey Murphy (Bernstein, 1956/1965) stated details about life in Ireland during the first half of the nineteenth century that I do not believe she had learned normally. (Persons who dismiss this case as an instance of cryptomnesia are usually unaware of the exposure of the alleged exposure of the case [Ducasse, 1960].) More recently, Tarazi (1990) has published a case of hypnotic regression with what she modestly calls "some unexplained contents." Thus, if I inveigh against the unwarranted and sometimes venal promotion of hypnotic regression to previous lives, I am all in favor of more research on the subject.

Stigmata

A Case of Stigmata

Early LF, Lifschutz JE

Arch Gen Psychiatry Vol. 30, Feb 1974, p. 197-200

Cases of religious stigmatization are extremely rare in the medical literature. We recently observed a 10 1/2-year-old black Baptist girl who experienced religious stigmata periodically over a three-week period immediately preceding Easter Sunday 1972. Closest possible scrutiny made it unlikely that these lesions were self-induced. The child, who is intensely religious, comes from a large, lower-middle class family in a large city. Her physical examination results were entirely normal. We were unable to detect psychopathology except within the range of her religious experience, i.e., indifference toward the bleeding and auditory hallucinations of a religious nature. Since no extensive psychological examination was possible, only the most general psychodynamic speculations are given. The recently described entity, psychogenic purpura, strikingly demonstrates the reality of mentally induced bleeding.

Experiencers' Section

Symbolic and mythical components of the abduction experience

by Chris McLachlan

In response to a couple of discussions with fellow experiencers, I would like to comment upon the recent emergence of images related to the abduction scenario. I am referring to the experiences of those who recall being forcibly brought to an underground facility populated by government operatives and lizard-like entities, and who are threatened with death and forced to witness the torture and/or execution of fellow experiencers as coercion to silence.

By way of preface, I am not yet convinced that all alien abduction experiences can be classified as objectively real. This is to say, I can't quite credit that all experiences recalled under the aid of hypnosis have been perpetrated upon the physical, temporal Self. This qualification is by no means meant to belittle or reduce the credibility of the witness or the experience. I merely wish to establish that I think there are many levels of self and many complex social and individual perceptions of reality which are at play at the core of any one individual's experience. To unravel even one individual's experience into a coherent, contiguous whole would be the equivalent of untying the Gordian knot.

With this in mind, I have listened to and read with interest the experiences recounted above. It seems to me that there is a thread of commonality which runs through these images and the images of heroic and holy literature. Right from the Epic of Gilgamesh up to the present, western heroic and spiritual literature has repeatedly played out the confrontation with, and triumph over, death as a prerequisite of individual or spiritual mastery. At the risk of being labeled a "stewpot" thinker, I feel I have to call attention to the parallels between these images and those of the narrative traditions which precede them. It should be noted, though, that by doing so I am not saying that these experiences are myths, but rather that their imagery bears a resemblance to spiritual quest literature of the western tradition.

First, there is the image of going underground. In myth, the journey underground is a metaphor for the self turning its attention inwards, and the realization of its own, terrifying depths. The journey of the hero is a pilgrimage to self-mastery and spiritual wholeness. (This has been more than adequately recounted in Joseph Campbell's "Hero With a Thousand Faces.") In the myth of Heracles, the hero is already proven a master of his temporal (conscious) existence. It is not until later in his labours that he is sent to the realm of Hades. In Nietzsche's "Thus Spake Zarathustra", Zarathustra is already a master of his temporal (conscious) realm when he begins to "go under" in his quest to become the overman. In western spiritual traditions, the cult of Orpheus and the Eleusinian mysteries involved a figurative and real journey underground. The cult of Mithras required the initiate to stand in a hole dug in the ground to be baptized there by the blood of a bull. The images are ubiquitous and repetitive, I need not go on. I'm sure you get the picture.

Second, there is the image of torment and confrontation with death. These experiencers have undergone a series of events, the trauma of which might be judged to be perilous not only to their mortal flesh, but to their identities. To "undergo", as Nietzsche puts it, is a frightful and perilous undertaking. One risks the annihilation of self and all understanding when one goes under to "quell the howling dogs of the soul". Part of the heroic quest is to risk the death of self as it is understood in order to gain a deeper and richer understanding of that self. Along the way, one must gain mastery over one's inner demons, the "howling dogs". Heracles had to subdue the hound of Hades and bring it back to the surface, i.e. confront and subdue his savage self and integrate it with his consciousness. Jason had to sow the dragon's teeth (an underground image) and then subdue the army which sprang from them. Plato, St. Anthony and Dante Allighieri all recount images of underground journey, torment, or witness of torment by demons, and return to the surface. The images, if one cares to read all the stories, are repetitive and consistent. It is not surprising to me, then, that these people's experiences should be couched in terms of torment by demonic figures and threat of death.

Finally, there is the return to the surface. I need not go into the image of resurrection; death and rebirth as the metaphor for the karmic cycle and the spiritual quest for renewal. These images are well documented everywhere, not just in western literature, but throughout human society at all levels and ages. The experiencers I am referring to have clearly undergone, or repeatedly undergo, a series of events which are playing out in modern imagery what appears to be a very old story. This is not to say that their experiences are not real. But to take these experiences merely at face value and to ignore their rich symbolism, which is so consistent with western heroic and spiritual tradition, is, I believe, to render the participants a disservice. It is possible that these experiences, whether real or symbolic, are the outriders of the experiencer's own unacknowledged heroic quest. If they are not perceived as such, surely the exploration of such a possibility might prove to be healing and empowering. It could be said that these experiencers have already fulfilled an heroic quest in recounting their stories. Their assailants' dramatic coercive tactics have had neither of the promised effects: their victims are neither silent, nor are they dead. In telling their stories, these people might feasibly have fulfilled one of their own heroic labours. Whatever the case, I believe that something much more powerful and subtle is at work here than simple abduction and intimidation.

Finally, on the point of the utility of myth, or "stewpot thinking', I must ask myself: why do these stories repeat themselves in such consistent terms, if not for our own edification? It seems to me that the road to spiritual mastery has been pretty clearly mapped for us through the ages. Image awareness, identification and/or interpretation is an integral part of this process both in the east (the Tibetan Book of the Dead, for example) and in the West (an example lies in the text of the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas: "Jesus said, ' When you see your likeness, you rejoice. But when you see your images which came into being before you, and which neither die nor become manifest, how much you will have to bear!' ")

Throughout time and across cultures, heroic images are persistent, repetitive and as consistent as Morse code. How deaf can we be in order to ignore their refrain? In these new images, it seems like there is a very patient and subtle teacher, call it what you will, who is reformulating a very ancient lesson for our modern minds. I feel quite strongly that these images of underground coercion and release are more than they appear to be. If the individuals involved could use their own images as a road map to their own self knowledge, something very positive could spring from such alarm and trauma. It is a risk, however. As Nietzsche put it, there are no guarantees that the process by which we go under will not destroy our sanity and ourselves. Here, I must point again to the therapeutic community with the challenge to help experiencers to take their own meanings from their experiences in order that they may successfully integrate these images into their conscious self-awareness.

(continued from Page 21)

Footnote

*2. Other articles include "The Question of Hypnosis and Creativity in Abduction Reports — Mythic, Artistic, and Visionary Imagery in Altered States of Consciousness." No. 296, MUFON UFO Journal, December 1992. "Metamorphosis, Part One" and "Metamorphosis, Part Two" in Contact Forum, Spring 1994. The co-authored narrative of my recognition of this phenomenon is in a chapter in Dr. John Mack's new book Abduction.